

## **Black History Month 2022 at the Library of Virginia**

**Free events, resources, and a related exhibition shed light on the African American experience.**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RICHMOND, VIRGINIA – The Library of Virginia has three intriguing virtual events, a new exhibition, and a wealth of digital resources to help you explore Black history this February! All are free and open to the public. See details below.

### **BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENTS:**

#### **PANEL DISCUSSION**

#### **Research Stories from Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative**

**Wednesday, February 9, 2022** | 7:00–8:30 PM | Place: Online | Free

Registration required: [https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_PdFxjWwWS1WzD4OJ2GlyBw](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_PdFxjWwWS1WzD4OJ2GlyBw)

Join us for a virtual panel discussion on Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative, a digital project that provides access to records of enslaved and free Black people in the Library of Virginia's collections. Project manager Lydia Neuroth will introduce the project, describe the scope and document types, and moderate a 45-minute discussion between genealogists, researchers, and scholars on how they have used the platform to enhance their work. A Q&A session at the end will allow audience members to ask questions and offer their own feedback. For more information, contact Lydia Neuroth at [lydia.neuroth@lva.virginia.gov](mailto:lydia.neuroth@lva.virginia.gov) or 804.692.3772.

[www.lva.virginia.gov/news/calendar?event=514](http://www.lva.virginia.gov/news/calendar?event=514)

#### **BOOK CLUB**

#### **Common Ground Virginia History Book Group**

**Tuesday, February 15, 2022** | 6:00–7:30 PM | Place: Online | Free

Registration required: [https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJckdeCsrD0oHtTZyPh6DEsWtDJ7p\\_KmAno7](https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJckdeCsrD0oHtTZyPh6DEsWtDJ7p_KmAno7)

On the third Tuesday evening of each month, join a virtual book group discussion on compelling nonfiction books handpicked by Library staff that explore Virginia history, society, and culture. **For Black History Month in February, we'll discuss *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story***, a collection of essays, short stories, and poetry that explores the legacy of slavery in present-day America. Our discussion will focus on the nonfiction essays; however, there is no requirement to read all the essays in order to participate. For more information, contact Becky Schneider at [rebecca.schneider@lva.virginia.gov](mailto:rebecca.schneider@lva.virginia.gov) or 804.692.3550. [www.lva.virginia.gov/news/calendar?event=507](http://www.lva.virginia.gov/news/calendar?event=507)

#### **A CONVERSATION WITH ROHULAMIN QUANDER**

#### **The Quanders: Since 1684, An Enduring African American Legacy**

**Thursday, February 17, 2022** | 6:00–7:30 PM | Place: Online | Free

Registration required: [https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_d59F3h7eR3KYf5YTBP3gzQ](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_d59F3h7eR3KYf5YTBP3gzQ)

Join Rohulamin Quander, author of the inspiring new book *The Quanders: Since 1684, An Enduring African American Legacy*, and Gregg Kimball, the Library of Virginia's director of Public Services and Outreach, in a virtual discussion about the history of one of America's oldest African American families. From trials and tribulations, to turning stumbling blocks into stepping stones, the Quander story is one of triumph and sustained accomplishment, despite racially imposed obstacles as inhibitors to success. For more information, contact Ashley Ramey Craig at [ashley.ramey@lva.virginia.gov](mailto:ashley.ramey@lva.virginia.gov) or 804.692.3001. [www.lva.virginia.gov/news/calendar?event=520](http://www.lva.virginia.gov/news/calendar?event=520)

#### **RELATED EXHIBITION:**

#### **Your Humble Petitioner**

**Legislative Petitions Gave Voice to Virginians**

**February 7–November 19, 2022** | Place: Library of Virginia Exhibition Gallery & Lobby | Free

*Although it's not specifically a Black history exhibition, Your Humble Petitioner reveals several poignant stories of enslaved and formerly enslaved Black Virginians that can be found in the Library's Legislative Petitions Collection. The collection contains a gold mine of historical information not available anywhere else.*

Imagine having to explain to the House of Delegates why you want to divorce your spouse, change your name, or take other actions that affect your life. Virginians had to do just that for nearly a century. Their stories can be found in the Library's Legislative Petitions Collection.

During the years between the American Revolution and the Civil War, Virginians submitted petitions to the General Assembly to bring local or personal issues to the attention of their legislators. The Library's collection of nearly 25,000 petitions reveals how Virginians communicated their concerns on a wide range of topics. To obtain legal permission to operate a ferry, maintain a tavern, or carry out many other activities, residents of the commonwealth were required to introduce a petition into the House of Delegates to begin the process of acceptance or rejection. The right to petition was not restricted by class, race, or sex. *Your*

*Humble Petitioner* highlights petitions that involved deeply personal issues such as divorce and requests by emancipated Black people to remain in the commonwealth, offering a glimpse into the realities of 18th- and 19th-century life.

The exhibition includes the story of James Lafayette, who was enslaved in New Kent County but became a spy during the American Revolution, serving under the Marquis de Lafayette. In 1786, he successfully petitioned the General Assembly for his freedom. His petition describes his service: “That during the time of his serving the Marquiss he often at the peril of his life found means to frequent the British Camp, by which means he kept open a channel of the most useful communications to the army of the state...”

[www.lva.virginia.gov/news/calendar?event=524](http://www.lva.virginia.gov/news/calendar?event=524)

## **DIGITAL BLACK HISTORY RESOURCES:**

**Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative** | [www.virginiamemory.com/collections/aan](http://www.virginiamemory.com/collections/aan)

This digital project provides access to records of enslaved and free Black people in the Library of Virginia's collections.

**Digital Legislative Petitions Collection** | [www.virginiamemory.com/collections/petitions](http://www.virginiamemory.com/collections/petitions)

Searchable by keyword, locality, and subject, this collection is a rich source of stories about ordinary Virginians and their lives—including many Black Virginians.

**Research Guides & Indexes** | <https://lva-virginia.libguides.com>

Find multiple guides at this link under “African American Resources.”

### **19th-Century Black Legislator Biographies**

<https://encyclopediaofvirginia.org/entries/african-american-legislators-in-virginia-1867-1899>

A collaboration between the Library’s *Dictionary of Virginia Biography* and Virginia Humanities’ *Encyclopedia Virginia*, this project documents the lives of the Black men who served in the Virginia General Assembly and the Constitutional Convention of 1867–1868.

**Online Exhibitions** | [https://virginiamemory.com/exhibitions/online\\_exhibitions](https://virginiamemory.com/exhibitions/online_exhibitions)

Our online exhibitions webpage includes Black history–related content such as [True Sons of Freedom](#), [To Be Sold: Virginia and the American Slave Trade](#), and [Remaking Virginia: Transformation through Emancipation](#).

**Document Bank of Virginia** | <https://edu.lva.virginia.gov/dbva>

At this education portal, teachers and students can find fascinating documents on the African American experience for projects and classroom use. Browse by theme: “African American History”

## **Strong Men & Women in Virginia History | <https://edu.lva.virginia.gov/changemakers/strong-mw>**

Early in February, Dominion Energy and the Library of Virginia will announce this year's Strong Men & Women in Virginia History honorees, distinguished Black Virginians who are celebrated during Black History Month for their contributions to the commonwealth and the nation. Find inspiring biographies of current and past honorees on the Library's Virginia Changemakers website.

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**Find related images here:**

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/wfv8oifza27ldok/AAC-Mk4Jx02wTHaJ7mgpMvYRa?dl=0>

### **About the Library of Virginia**

The Library of Virginia is one of the oldest agencies of Virginia government, founded in 1823 to preserve and provide access to the state's incomparable printed and manuscript holdings. Its collection, which has grown steadily through the years, is the most comprehensive resource in the world for the study of Virginia history, culture, and government with over 130 million items in the collections. The Library also engages the public through in-person and virtual events, education programs, and online resources that reach nearly 4 million individuals each year throughout the commonwealth and beyond. Visit [www.lva.virginia.gov](http://www.lva.virginia.gov).

**January 31, 2022**